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ABSTRACT

This paper summarizes a case study of an educational reform strategy involving the development of a school-university partnership in which the university was a member of the National Accelerated Schools Network. The Accelerated Schools model builds on strengths, emphasizes agenda and resource sharing, and institutionalizes the school-university collaboration process. The Accelerated Schools model implies that genuine and lasting educational renewal and change can result from a system of educational organizational development and research which can impact both the present practice and the training of future teachers. The case study, which used John Goodlad's "ideal partnership paradigm" as the conceptual framework, revealed the potential for changing education by linking school-level realities to college of education teacher and administrator preparation programs' pedagogy and practices. The study also revealed that the establishment of a mutual goal, rather than involvement in a particular project, provided the primary impetus for the partnership's development. Four separate stages of the partnership could be identified, to which four separate sets of role relations and expectations were attached. (Contains 60 references.) (JDD)

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D R A F T

USING AN ACCELERATED SCHOOLS' SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP TO INFORM CHANGE IN A COLLEGE OF EDUCATION'S TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING PROGRAMS

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Using An Accelerated Schools' School-University Partnership To Inform Change In A College of Education's Teacher and Administrator Training Programs

Introduction

For many decades educators have been involved in a dialogue about America's system of education and the best way to improve it. While opinions vary about what is wrong with our schools (Apple, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), there is national agreement on the fact that most schools should undergo deep structural change before the end of this century (The Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986; Fullan, 1991; Goodlad, 1988; 1990a, 1990b, 1993; The Holmes Group, 1986). This dialogue began in earnest in 1983, when the National Commission on Excellence in Education published the results of its eighteen month study of our schools and colleges. Focusing on the manner in which our system of education competitively compared with that of the rest of the industrialized world, the Commission labeled us **"A Nation At Risk...."** They reported that our educational system has become steeped in mediocrity and is increasingly failing to produce a population capable of competition in the world market. This report served to advance society's awareness of the need for educational change. It sparked the initiation of various academic, business, and political coalitions which sought to respond with varied reform and restructuring configurations. These configurations targeted several starting points within our system of education --- top-down, bottom-up, teacher

accountability, learner accountability, parent involvement, increased state appropriations, federal regulations, and private sector involvement and support, to name a few. Many of the most notable and far-reaching reform proposals have identified higher education teacher and administrator preparation programs as a crucial component for overall educational change (Asbaugh & Kasten, 1991; Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986; The Commission on the Education of Teachers into the 21st Century, 1991; The Holmes Group, 1986; Sommerfeld, 1993).

Previously, higher education's teacher and administrator preparation had previously remained relatively free of the criticism that had plagued the public kindergarten through twelfth grade educational sector since the 1950's. In the early 1980's the focus shifted to the competency and training of teachers and administrators (Clark, 1988; Murphy, 1990; The National Association of Secondary Principals, 1992). "Analysis revealed that teachers and administrators were drawn from the bottom of the intellectual barrel and then poorly trained for their roles" (Murphy, 1990, p. 313). Schools, in turn began to find fault with the way teachers were being prepared. Teachers in the schools were questioning the validity of the theory courses taken in college (Asbaugh & Kasten, 1991; Pitner, 1988; Ciscell, 1993). Student teachers were experiencing the trauma of the dichotomy between the reality of the public school classrooms and the training they received at the university. Administrators were upset and questioning the lack of training of recent teacher

graduates. The isolation of the teacher preparation process (Goodlad, 1990a, 1990b), the disparity between theory and actual practice (Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1988), and the lack of what some school reformers are referring to as the "depth and breadth" (Rich, 1991) of the liberal arts, science, and mathematics courses are at the heart of the higher education criticisms.

The development of collaborative partnerships between colleges of education and local public and non-public schools emerged as a bridge to narrow the gap between the realities of educational practice and educational training programs (Goodlad, 1988). The requirement that this *symbiotic* relationship exist in collaborative activities imposes a flow and use of information in a *two-directional* pattern; a pattern wherein universities disseminate research findings to schools where "real world" application results are reported back to inform on-going theory development and research at those universities (Goodlad, 1988). The pattern is a proactive approach for linking research and practice in a manner which focuses the research attention on actual school site needs and conditions. Most often, the university's posture in past partnerships with schools has been *one-directional* in that most schools and school districts traditionally looked to university personnel for special interests studies, program development, and continuing education services for staff (Murphy, 1990). This *one-directional* paradigm assumes that higher education not only understands the problems confronting schools, but also knows the answers to school

problems and can use them to show schools how to solve their problems. Contemporary research demonstrates that this has seldom been the case (Darling-Hammond, 1985; Goodlad, 1988; Rich, 1991). The reality is that higher education no more has the answers to schools' problems, or fully understands the context of K-12 schooling, than it has answers to or understands many of its own current problems. It is the isolation of higher education from the realities of the K-12 experience that has led to the development of idealistic and faulty solutions for (Fullan, 1991; Goodlad, 1988; Murphy, 1990).

The Research

This paper provides an overview of a study which investigated an educational reform strategy that sought to bring about change in the teacher and administrator preparation programs at a university's college of education. The strategy focused on the isolation and disparity which exist between most teacher and administrator programs and the actual day-to-day situations of the field. It involved the development of a school-university partnership which maintained school improvement as its primary focus. The college of education selected for this study claimed its secondary focus to be the use of knowledge from the field as "...incentives for teacher and administrator training programs to transform their activities in conjunction with the hands-on transformation of the schools they [were] working with" (McCarthy, 1991, p. 12). The study was designed to observe and document this *transformation* in order to understand

the social phenomena of this reciprocal change relationship.

The research was focused on establishing an understanding of the social phenomena of educational change from the perspective of the teachers, school staffs, administrators, central office personnel, college faculty and teacher and administrator education students involved in its processes. The study described and analyzed the school-university partnership through which a university's college of education transforms its practices and pedagogy by using field knowledge. The methods and circumstances through which the Accelerated Schools model was used to address and direct partnership goals and activities were also discussed in this study.

The Conceptual Framework

The goals of the Accelerated Schools school-university partnership model mirror those found in recent research literature regarding the purpose of school-university partnerships. The Accelerated Schools model, like other models for school-university partnership collaboration, implies that genuine and lasting educational renewal and change can result from a system of educational organizational development and research which can impact both the present practice and the training of future teachers (The Carnegie Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986; The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1988; Comer, 1987; Darling-Hammond, 1985; Dewey, 1899; The Holmes Group, 1986, 1990).

The researcher established the intent of the Accelerated

Schools model by grouping the objectives listed in its first Satellite Center Agreement into three major goals. The model's developers were perceived as intentionally creating the kind of partnership relationship described in the literature (Goodlad, 1988; The Holmes Group, 1986; Lieberman, 1992a, 1992b; McCarthy, 1991; Zetlin et al, 1992). The goals were found by the researcher to bear a vivid similarity to those contained in John Goodlad's (1988) "ideal partnership paradigm". Within this paradigm is his view of the school-university partnership as "...embracing simultaneous individual and institutional renewal" (p. 5). This "ideal partnership paradigm" was the conceptual framework that was employed as the lens in this research. The case study used the paradigm to view the realities which exist in developing and maintaining a school-university partnership. Goodlad's paradigm, like the principles and values of the Accelerated Schools model, was inspired by his belief in John Dewey's (1966) vision of one educational system, kindergarten through baccalaureate, wherein each sector is perpetuated and informed through active collaboration with the others. Goodlad joined Dewey in proposing "...a joining of schools and schools of education in a permanent partnership similar to those now imperfectly forged between most other professional schools and the settings where their graduates intern and practice" (p. 210). The "ideal partnership paradigm" lens was focused on the Accelerated Schools partnership in order to provide an opportunity for articulating a specific Accelerated Schools

partnership structure within the present educational change model. Within his "ideal partnership paradigm", Goodlad conceives that the potential of the school-university partnership to bring about the renewal and change of both sectors lies in the existence of two major essentials:

> First, the workers - at all levels - must have optimal opportunity to infuse their efforts with the expertise of others engaged in similar work....Second, there must be continuous infusion of both relevant knowledge and alternative (indeed, countervailing) ideas for practice stemming from inquiry into the enterprise (p. 10).

Embedded in his discussion of these essentials, and recurrent throughout his work on school-university partnerships, is the Dewian inspired framework which is similar to that implied by the Accelerated Schools Satellite Centers Contract Agreement. This framework is not set forth in Goodlad's (1988) work in a concise manner. The researcher was required to synthesize Goodlad's ideals from several different statements and phrasings within his writings, and that of his supporters, in order to derive a manageable framework for the study. For the purpose of establishing research criteria that could be used in this study, the essence of Goodlad's framework and the similar concepts within the Accelerated Schools model were synthesized into a common research language as follows:

1. The *symbiotic* nature of the relationship

2. A *two-directional* flow of information

3. The *use of local knowledge*

4. The creation of *parity* among the partners

5. The establishment of a *common agenda*

Goodlad (1988) was found to use these ideals to increase "...the probability that the agenda of research and the agenda of practice will be parallel and significant - the right agenda, so to speak, for their time and place in history" (p. 10), and to "bridge" the symbiotic nature of the partnership (p. 217). The researcher also found that Levin (1988c) appears to use these ideals to build the capacity in "...school districts and schools to modify their forms of organization to focus greater decision responsibilities on the individual school (p. 223), and in teacher and administrator training programs to "...adopt new courses and training experiences as well as to establish internships in schools that are dedicated to accelerated learning" (p. 224).

School-University Partnerships

Sirotnik, Goodlad, and others (1988) have provided educational research literature with explicit examples of educational institutions' traditional resistance to change, and how that has been overcome in some instances. The new paradigm of school-university collaboration and the development of *symbiotic* partnerships have been sued by partnering institutions to effect their own mutual change. These partnerships have the specific purpose of developing collaborative relationships in

which the parties demonstrate a willingness to engage in competent discourse about improving education (Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1988). The relationship of the parties is based on a requirement of *parity* (Keating & Clark, 1988) among the parties which engage in a process of inquiry to solve problems of mutual concern and to arrive at appropriate solutions which will be of mutual benefit (Clark, 1988, Osajima, 1989). This "ideal partnership" paradigm (Goodlad, 1988) is self-perpetuated through *two-directional* collaboration and a knowledge generation process which can be used to satisfy both the self-interests and partnership interests of the parties (Goodlad, 1988; Sirotnik & Goodlad, 1988). At its 1992 conference on school-university collaboration, the American Association for Higher Education cited the need to institutionalize the process of generating new knowledge through the type of partnerships advocated by Goodlad (1988). They saw it as being a matter of bringing both institutions to a point of embracing the economic utility of adopting a "common agenda" (Osajima, 1989). Such an agenda requires using the strengths of each to garner the shrinking outside resources outside education to solve the problems which mutually interest the larger society.

Accelerated Schools Partnerships

The concepts of building on strengths, agenda and resource sharing, and institutionalizing the school-university collaboration process are part of the philosophical tenets underpinning the research literature and strategies of the

Accelerated Schools model of school restructuring and school-university partnership. The Accelerated Schools' philosophy and concepts are spread across the United States and other countries through the development of satellite centers that contract with Stanford University (the model's developers) to initiate local pilot school sites. The satellite center approach to facilitate the growth of the Accelerated Schools movement began in late 1989.

The overall purpose of these centers was that they become local sources of Accelerated Schools training, research, and evaluation. "The Satellite Center Project had a number of objectives ...which may be grouped together into three major goals" (McCarthy, 1991, p. 14). The first goal was to have the centers use the knowledge gained from their work with Accelerated Schools pilot sites to promote and refine the model through research, publications and conferences. They were also required to use this knowledge to bring about meaningful changes in their teacher and administrator education programs. The second goal focused directly on the requirement that each center launch at least one pilot school with which they would establish a close and interactive relationship. The centers were expected to build in these pilot schools a capacity to stand as a model within their school district. This model would serve to attract other schools, and eventually the entire district, to become Accelerated Schools. "Teachers and administrators going through the university educational preparation programs also become

empowered to become change agents for their own schools, capable of initiating and facilitating the process in their own schools and districts" (McCarthy, 1991, p. 15). And, the requirement that the centers engage in collaborative research with the pilot schools in order to reinforce and expand the theory, implications, application, and evaluative understandings of the Accelerated Schools model.

The research-based relationship that was required to develop between colleges of education and their pilot schools is supposed to facilitate bringing theory and practice into alignment with the local context of student and community needs and expectations (Levin, 1987, 1988a, 1988b). An understanding of the design and intent of the Accelerated Schools Satellite Center model of school-university partnership was significant to this study in that it facilitated answering the question of whether or not schools can transform universities. Specifically, the study sought to discover the nature of the role which this model played in changing a college of education's teacher and administrator preparation programs.

In their First Year Interim Report (October, 1992), the college of education under study described in detail the purpose of its partnership in terms of the college's use of the experiences and activities of informing, renewing schools to change attitudes, practices, and the pedagogy within the college of education. This purpose was the specific focus of the research.

The participants in the college of education's Accelerated Schools Satellite Center project which claimed to be achieving goals of teacher and administrator education renewal and change through its research and collaboration with pilot schools were the primary sources of information. This research examined their claim through the lens of Goodlad's "ideal partnership paradigm" and described the college of education satellite center's dual role as "change agent" and "change target" (Osajima, 1989).

The case study report from which this paper is derived actually described in great detail: (1) a partnership in which two organizations are working together towards common goals, but with acknowledgement of the *symbiotic* nature of the relationship and recognition of the need of each to protect their own individual interests and vision; (2) the relationship between the Satellite Center and local schools to determine the existence of a *two-directional* flow of information and a shared process of knowledge generation; (3) the use of *local knowledge* to inform the implementation of the Accelerated Schools model in local schools; (4) a collaborative partnership process of reflective practice, inquiry, and solution testing at school sites in which both parties possess a sense of *parity*; and (5) the development of a *common agenda* for educational change which uses the knowledge gained in schools to renew teacher and administrator training pedagogy.

The university which was selected as the research site used for this study is a member of the National Accelerated Schools

Network. It was the newest satellite center in the Accelerated Schools Satellite Center Network at the time of this study. A new satellite site was considered to be ideal for observing activities which involve the development and maintenance of partnerships with schools as they unfolded. Other satellite centers which have been in the national network longer were presumed to be more involved in partnership maintenance activities. The "ideal case" selection method involved choosing the most efficient, effective, and desirable of the population for research purposes.

In their "First Year Interim Report" (1992), satellite center personnel contended that their project was impacting all units of the college. Within the college, the dean and other faculty claimed to be using the Accelerated Schools principles and processes in their daily practices. Faculty in the teacher and administrator education programs were also reported to be using the Accelerated Schools school-university partnership activities to address earlier identified pedagogical failings. The college was found to have a working relationship with the county school district that existed prior to the Accelerated Schools Project. Three schools in that district are presently involved in the Accelerated Schools process as pilot sites. At the time of this study, student enrollment at the university is slightly less than 20,000, but was rapidly increasing.

The county school district studied in this research is also rapidly growing. The district is the fourteenth largest in the

United States, and comprises 7,910 square miles developing land. In 1991, it set a national record by opening eighteen new schools to bring the total number of schools in the district to 177. Over 2,000 new teachers were hired by that school district in the past two years.

The 129,245 multi-ethnic student population was 33.3 percent minority with 20.5 percent of the total number being eligible for free or reduced price lunches. The student populations at the three pilot schools that were involved in implementing the Accelerated Schools model closely mirrored that of the entire school district. The partners claimed that the partnership provided a reliable structure for the schools and the university to work together to solve mutual problems impeding their academic success. These problems were much the same as those impeding educational success across the nation.

Limitations of the Research Lens

Goodlad's "ideal partnership paradigm" was used to develop an understanding of the social phenomena of the educational change process involved in an Accelerated Schools school-university partnership. As a paradigm, Goodlad's model provided the social construct which presented a way of thinking about the school-university partnership phenomena. Used to guide a research study, the paradigm also provided the researcher with a means of differentiating authentic examples of the phenomena.

The five essential components of the Goodlad partnership paradigm provided direction for the study. The essentials were

observed to be applicable for use as criteria to conclude whether the partnership under study fit within a "best case" or "ideal type" category. In this case, however, the paradigm's essentials were found to provided a static view of the partnership phenomena. The view was static in that it only revealed what the partnership was at the time of this study, but it could not take into account previous partnership processes of development and those continuing over time -- the before and the during.

A Model of Partnership Evolution

The research began with two basic assumptions about the nature of the school-university partnership under study. The first assumption involved a belief in the potential to simultaneously change education at the school sites and college levels through a restructuring model such as the Accelerated Schools Project. This belief was supported by the model's focus on linking the practices and contents of teacher and administrator training programs to the context of today's classrooms and schools (Cuban, 1984; Darling-Hammond, 1985; Goodlad, 1988; McCarthy, 1991; McCarthy et al, 1993; Richardson, 1993a, 1993b). The second assumption which existed at the inception of this research was that the partnership under study originated through the Accelerated Schools Project. It was assumed that the development of the Accelerated Schools Satellite Center at the college of education, and the resulting implementation of the Accelerated Schools process in pilot school

district sites, provided the primary impetus for the partnership's development.

The findings which resulted from this inquiry included support for the first assumption, and pointed towards the potential for changing education by linking school level realities to college of education teacher and administrator preparation programs' pedagogy and practices. Other research findings refuted the second assumption. The case study results established that the Accelerated Schools Project did not provide the initial impetus for the partnership's development. Interview and document examination results demonstrated that while the partnership appeared to have a positive impact on changing the contents and practices of teacher and administrator preparation programs at the college of education, it in fact began prior to the college of education's involvement in the Accelerated Schools Project. The Director of the Accelerated Schools Satellite Center revealed that the reality was that the partnership began as "...sort of an 'umbrella' organization under which a few existing programs and projects were relocated, and other new projects were later brought in." The Accelerated Schools Project was one of the new projects brought in later.

Accepting these facts, the research then focused on discovering the actual course taken in the partnership's development. Since it did not develop as a result of the Accelerated Schools project, the researcher sought to determine what events led to its establishment. The research findings

indicated that the partnership was not established in an event, but rather through a process of varying postures. This process was found to have developed over time through a series of discernable stages in the relationship that evolved between the school district and the college of education. It was also discovered that these stages could be clearly isolated, one from the other, and illustrated such that a total system of evolving relationships is demonstrated. The central activity supporting the organization's evolution from one stage to another was found to be collaboration.

Within the different stages of association and collaboration the organizations became involved in a developmental process of building the capacity to work together on a continuing basis. The establishment of a mutual goal, rather than involvement in a particular project, was found to provide the primary impetus for the partnership development. This process was found to be evolutionary in that the growth of collaboration at each stage was used to support increased involvement and collaboration at the next stage. [See Figure I.]

In this case study, the school district and the college of education had a history of poor cooperation and little or no collaboration. This poor relationship was reported to have spanned many years. It was recently defeated through a number of factors which served to change the individual focus of both organizations, and therefore, their attitudes towards working with one another. These factors included changes in leadership

and personnel, strategic planning and organizational development in response to internal and external environmental pressures, and other accommodations which satisfied each organization's own enlightened self-interest.

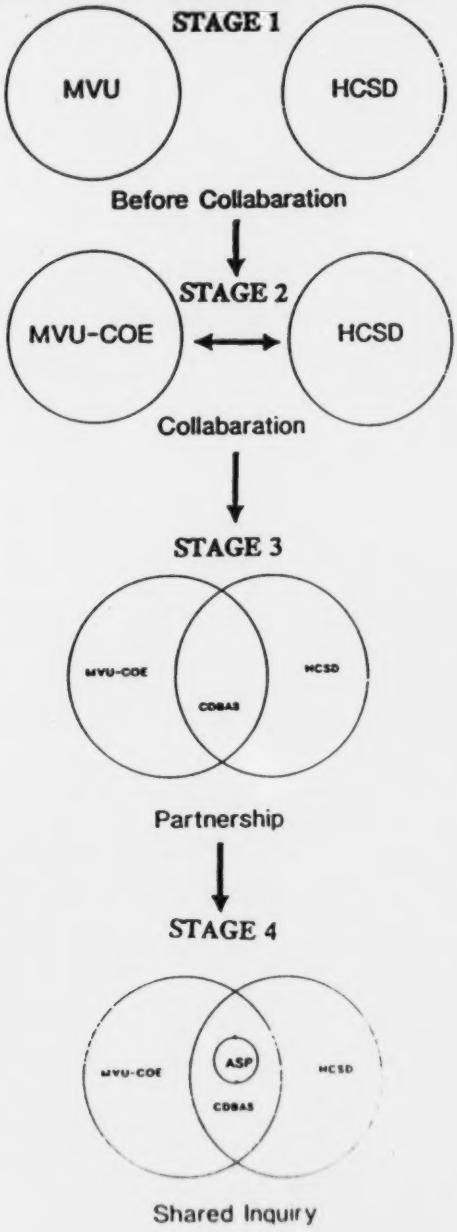
The findings which were obtained in this case study indicated that the school district and the university experienced a relationship-change process which led them into the evolution of a school-university partnership. Figure I provides a visual reconstruction of the school district's and the university's relationship change process. Although there were varied activities which took place as the partnership evolved, the most significant changes are distinguished by the four stages:

> *STAGE ONE* in the evolutionary model emanates from the research data. The two organizations were reported to have little or no observable interaction or relationship.
>
> *STAGE TWO* illustrates the school district and the college of education as they began to collaborate and cooperate on a limited and short-termed basis.

Participants revealed that these activities provided opportunities for both organizations to develop dialogues about their mutual challenges. As the levels of interaction increased, a platform of mutual trust was developed. The dialogue escalated to include mutual problem sharing and solution seeking. It is at this point that the two organizations entered into and managed to sustain the essence of the collaborative relationship which was later used to support the proposition of partnership.

Figure I

A MODEL OF EVOLVING SCHOOL-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP



STAGE THREE marks the point at which the two organizations created a new tradition of working together collaboratively to establish a mutual goal. The previous two stages had created an atmosphere of trust in which each organization felt comfortable enough to present their strengths and weakness to one another as a means of joining forces against their mutual threats.

The case study data revealed that this mutual goal functioned to highlight the need for the two organizations to commit to a more permanent and long-termed relationship. They felt that the new relationship would allow them to work together to solve the common problems which might impede their mutual goals achievement.

Through the school-university partnership which evolved, the school district and the college of education incorporated Goodlad's (1988) "ideal partnership paradigm" essentials as a means of defining the parameters of partnership relations. These essentials supported the partnership's evolution into the shared inquiry activities.

STAGE FOUR involves the partnership's use of shared problems solving strategies. This is the point at which the Accelerated Schools Project was fully incorporated into the partnership. The Accelerated Schools model of school-university partnership was also found to have its greatest impact on the partnership and on educational change at the higher education level.

Before the Accelerated Schools Satellite Center was established at the college of education, the project's philosophy and processes were already being used by the leaders at the college and the school district. The Accelerated Schools principles and values had been incorporated into the personal praxis of the dean of the college and the superintendent of the school district. Each had been influenced by the Accelerated Schools' Inquiry Process when they began their in-depth organizational exploration to determine appropriate change strategies.

After the Accelerated Schools Satellite Center began to function, it was reported that the Inquiry Process evolved as the "...preferred problem-solving strategy..." of the partnership. In the last stage, *STAGE FOUR*, of the evolutionary partnership process, Figure I illustrates how the Accelerated Schools Project was place under the partnership "umbrella" and began to function as its driving force. The organizing structure that is implicit in the Accelerated Schools' processes, that of cadres and steering committees, were replicated in the structures which were adopted by the partnership. The research findings also presented evidence that the school district and the college of education increasingly employed the Inquiry Process, even when confronted with other organizational challenges not associated with the partnership.

The "design" represented in Figure I was derived through an analysis of the research data which traced the social relationships that existed between the school district and

college of education over a five year period of time. The "design" provided a view of four separate stages of partnership development to which four separate sets of role relations and expectations were attached. Applying Goodlad's paradigm to this same data in a qualitative manner had the effect of obscuring the various stages from view. This limitation could have resulted in the exclusion of a significant amount of available data from consideration and analysis in this research. Those limitations and exclusions were avoided in that the researcher recognized the significance of the evidence which Goodlad's "ideal partnership paradigm" could not accommodate. Data which extended beyond the static nature of the five essential components of the "ideal partnership paradigm" were organized according to emergent themes. A discussion of those themes, along with an analysis of each, constituted a large part of the actual research report.

The use and examination of Goodlad's "ideal partnership paradigm" and its five essential components provided the study's criteria for analysis. In addition to the Goodlad construct, an evolutionary or developmental scheme was presented in Figure I. The research findings indicated that partnership development is a process and not an event. Within this process the "ideal partnership paradigm" essentials are worked towards and eventually agreed upon, one by one, as the organizations establish the relationship. The partnership process evolves as the organizations work together voluntarily in brief episodes of collaboration on mutually recognized challenges. The episodes of

collaboration escalate in intensity and duration over a period of time. It is this escalation which supports individual postures for partnering. Partnerships evolve as a means of meeting individual organizational needs, solving individual problems, and mitigating individual losses. The partnership is a recognition that working together is in the own best interest of each.

The evidence produced in this study can be used to support a conclusion that the subject school-university partnership provides a dynamic model worthy of replication. Thus far, in its performance documented in this research study, the partnership has demonstrated a potential to act as a force for educational change. This change is projected to be possible at both the schools district and college of education levels.

The study concludes that in its present structure, the Accelerated Schools' school-university partnership holds a potential for continuous adaptability to internal and external pressures. Organizational adaptation is accomplished as the organizations continue to cope with the relations between environmental demands and organizational resources. Through the development of the partnership, the school district and the college of education involved in this study increased their joint and individual potential for organizational adaptation.

The involvement of Accelerated Schools as a driving force in educational problem-solving and innovative program design is considered to be an indicator of potential partnership longevity which inspires continued observation and analysis.

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